

# CULTURAL FACTORS IN TRANSLATION

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## 1. Introduction

Culture is defined as “the customs and beliefs, art, way of life and social organisation of a particular country or group” (*Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary of Current English*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Moreover, Newmark explains culture as “the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression” (1988: 94). Since culture is so deeply connected with language, each language reflects its own culturally specific features. Wardhaugh suggests that the structure of a given language determines the way in which the speakers of that language view the world (1986: 212). In other words, different languages reflect different cultures and values, and if the culture of the source language (SL) differs from that of the target language (TL), word selections or ways of making statements will be different in the target text (TT) from those of the source text (ST).

Some words and expressions are unique and specific to a culture and cannot be simply translated word for word from one language to another. Jakobson acknowledges that interlingual translation involves two different codes, therefore there is no full equivalence between them (2000: 114). According to Toury,

translation is nearly always conducted within a certain cultural environment, and consequently, “translators may be said to operate first and foremost in the interest of the culture into which they are translating” (1995: 12). Indeed, translators need to modify or compensate the messages of the ST that are greatly influenced by the source culture and language to communicative and familiar messages with a natural form of expression for the target audience to comprehend and accept. Translating the ST into an acceptable and suitable linguistic and cultural form for the target audience is part of the translator’s responsibility in transcultural communication.

Translators should also carefully render culture-specific words and expressions without distorting the original message of the ST to achieve the goal of representing “the original message in the appropriate dominant cultural form in order to give it the greatest chance of success” (Coulthard, 1992: 13). While Nida places equal importance on both linguistic and cultural differences between the SL and the TL, he concludes that “differences between cultures may cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure” (1999: 130).

Many theorists, like Toury and Lefevere, advocate that literary texts are cultural artefacts and are part of “a system operating in the larger social, literary and historical systems of the target culture” (Munday, 2001: 108). Similarly, it can be postulated that translated texts are products of the target culture and have to meet the socio-cultural demands of the receiving system as this is initial yet critical role of translators in today’s worldwide quest for nurturing trust and understanding. Unless the messages of the ST are transported in a comprehensible and acceptable way for the receiving audience, the translators’ mission of building trust and understanding cannot be accomplished. Translators

may therefore be said to face various constraints in making the TT acceptable and comprehensible for the target audience and in allowing the TT to fulfil a certain function assigned by the target system.

This paper will attempt to investigate what involves the act of translating from English into Japanese and the possible constraints on the translator’s part. Through a close examination of shifts between a ST and its TT, attempts will be made to illustrate the constraints involved in English-Japanese translation. Translational strategies of which the translator applies in the act of translating will also be analysed for the same purpose.

### **1.1 The ST and the TT, and the reasons behind the choice of texts**

The ST chosen for the analysis is an English book titled *Princess Masako, Prisoner of the Chrysanthemum Throne: The Tragic True Story of Japan’s Crown Princess* written by an Australian journalist, Ben Hills. The book was first published in Australia by Random House in November 2006 and has proved popular in Australia, United States and parts of Asia. The Japanese translation was initially scheduled to be published soon after the publication of the original by Kodansha in Japan. However, a few days after the Japanese government denounced the book as “insulting to the Japanese people and the imperial family”, Kodansha announced they would back out. Finally in August 2007, another Tokyo-based publisher Dai-san Shokan published the Japanese translation despite the threats from right-wing nationalists. This translation is titled: *Prinsesu Masako* (meaning ‘Princess Masako’ written in Japanese syllabary) and is translated by Mariko Fujita. This ‘complete and equivalent translation’ (as described on the cover of the book) will be analysed as the TT for this analysis.

The book is about the life of Crown Princess Masako, a former high-flying diplomat at Japan's foreign ministry who is now the wife of Crown Prince Naruhito. The story is based on over sixty interviews with Australian, Japanese, American and English sources — the Crown Prince and Princess' friends, teachers and former colleagues who have never spoken publicly before. It scrutinises the Crown Princess' long depression after her marriage to the love-struck prince as well as the imperial court which has a history of 26 centuries. The book alleges that she conceived her daughter, Princess Aiko, through in vitro fertilisation and was driven to a nervous breakdown by the Imperial Household Agency which supervises imperial family affairs.

As the book addresses such controversial issues related to the imperial family, it drew Japanese government's denunciation and calls for an apology and corrections from the author and the publisher. However, in spite of numerous threats, the author refused to apologise and reminded the Japanese government that Australia is proud of its long tradition of free speech and will resist any attempt by a foreign government to censor or suppress information to which its citizens are entitled. He further stated that the only apology due is from the Imperial Household Agency, which should humbly apologise to Princess Masako for its treatment of her.

The aforementioned backdrop of the book's publication suggests that the culture of 'freedom of speech' may be practiced differently in Japan. The whole controversial issue related to this book prompted this comparative analysis on the translation and to investigate the translator's constraints in the course of translating a text protected by the culture of 'freedom of speech' into Japanese where the host society somehow seems conservative towards statements related to the imperial family. This paper will closely examine how the translator

transports the ST messages and represents the image of the original author and culture for the target audience. At the same time, this paper will address the translator's possible constraints in the act of translating and how she contributes to enhance the target audience's perception of the ST messages, source culture and, furthermore, the ST author.

## **1.2 Research method**

Languages do not form a perfect match to one another; if they did, a simple word-for-word substitution should work in all languages. Moreover, as the skopos theory developed by Hans J. Vermeer and Katharina Reiss advocates, language is not an autonomous system but is part of a culture and any translation is dependant on its skopos (aim, purpose) and situation (Snell-Hornby, 2006: 52). Furthermore, polysystem theory developed by Itamar Even-Zohar sees translated literature as "a system operating in the larger social, literary and historical systems of the target culture" (Munday, 2001: 108). As translation is an activity which involves adapting the ST to the TL, target socio-cultural function, as well as the target polysystems, translators inevitably resorts to shifting, and such shifting may cause considerable constraints on the translator's part.

Within the target-oriented approach to translation which views translation as a cultural product of the target system, Toury focuses on the translated texts, their process, features and functions but isolates them from their context and ideology, thereby not fully addressing quality in translation. While Lefevere also follows the view of translation as a cultural product of the target system, he addresses 'ideology' and 'power' which also influence the act of translating. According to Lefevere, there is a 'control factor' in the literary system which acts as a constraint on the translator. He argues that translators adapt an original work for a given audience and influence the ways in which the readers read the work. He

further concludes that translation is a ‘rewriting’ of an original text as they reflect “a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way” (Lefevere, 1992a: xi).

With an aim to demonstrate how the translator transports messages differently from the ST, this paper will examine Lefevere’s concept of ‘translation as a form of rewriting of an original text’ through closely studying the shifts by using a Systemic Functional Linguistics (systemic linguistics) approach which provides “a semantic account of the grammatical structures of the language” (White, 2001: 3). Moreover, Neubert and Shreve (in Lantaigne, 2001: 26) present the concept of communicative equivalence as encompassing the underlying value and ideology of the text. The communicative functions and meanings reflected in the structure and patterns of the ST and the TT will be examined for this purpose. By comparing the functions and meanings embedded in both texts, this paper will address issues such as ‘ideology’ and ‘power’ which might have influenced the production of the TT and discuss the possible constraints that the translator may have experienced in the service of power and ideology initiated by the target system.

## **2. Power and ideology in translation**

Like Toury, Lefevere also observes that translations “nearly always contain attempts to ‘naturalise’ the different culture, to make it conform more to what the reader of the translation is used to” (1999: 237). Moreover, he claims that translations are produced on the basis of an original text with the intention of adapting the original to a certain ideology or poetics of a different audience, and that the act of translating is often performed under constraints of patronage, poetics and ideology initiated by the target system, as such it is an act of ‘rewriting’ of an original to conform to certain purposes instituted by the

receiving system (Lefevere, 1992a).

Lefevere points out that ‘ideology’ functions as a tremendous constraint in the act of translating and notes that “rewritings are inspired by ideological motivations, or produced under ideological constraints” (1992a: 7). Ideology is not limited to the political sphere, it is “the grillwork of form, convention and belief which orders our actions” (Jameson in Lefevere, 1992a: 16). In the attempt to serve various ideological constraints, the translator inevitably leaves his or her marks in the translation. Indeed, in the TT, there are many traces of ideological constraints that are apparent in the passages where the translator inserts words or expressions “that are most emphatically not in the original” (Lefevere, 1992a: 42).

In the subsequent sections, Lefevere’s view of translation as a form of rewriting will be discussed through examining the shifts in the meanings and functions by using the systemic linguistics approach. By comparing the respective meanings and functions embedded in the ST and TT, issues such as ‘power or patronage’, ‘ideology’ and ‘poetics’ which might have acted as constraints for the translator will be addressed. In particular, the following categories of constraints will be examined:

- a) constraints influenced by patronage or power;
- b) ideological constraints prompted by the target audience;
- c) constraints initiated by the translator’s own sentiments or beliefs;
- d) constraints caused by creating greater interpersonal distances; and
- e) constraints prompted by projecting a certain image of the original work and author.

### 2.1.1 Constraints influenced by patronage or power

According to Lefevere, translation is an activity “carried out in the service of power” (1992a: vii) — a control factor or ‘patronage’ which can be exerted by a person, groups of persons, a religious body, a political party, a social class, a royal court, publishers and the media (ibid: 15). He further notes that such control factors often act as a force on the translators to produce translated texts which conform to their patron’s ideology (Lefevere, 1992b: 14). As a result, translators often resort to rewriting the original work. Moreover, Lefevere explains that patronage basically consists of three elements: 1) an ideological component which confines the act of translating; 2) an economic component on which the translator depends for his or her living; and 3) an element of status which could lead to elevating the translator’s reputation (1992a: 16).

### 2.1.2 Ideological component of power

The immediate patron of the translator is the Dai-san Shokan who published the translation. As stated on the cover of the TT, this publisher was eager to release ‘a complete and equivalent translation’ of the ST after the original publisher Kodansha “decided not to go ahead with the planned publication in the wake of protest by the Foreign Ministry and the Imperial Household Agency” (*J-Cast Business News*, 4 October, 2007).

The translator of the text in question initially translated the book for Kodansha and had therefore been involved in this controversial issue from the beginning. She was inevitably aware of the government’s uncompromising stance on the book. In spite of the Dai-san Shokan’s intention of publishing ‘a complete and equivalent translation’, she may still have experienced constraints in the service of power initiated by the government or the Imperial Household Agency in order to see the translation published. Therefore, it seems only natural that the

translator attempts to avoid insulting the government or the agency in every possible way, and as a result, she rewrites the original text to a certain degree in order to serve the conventions and ideology of the authority.

There are several instances where the translator tones down explicit statements about Princess Masako and the Imperial Household Agency in her attempt to make the text acceptable. For example:

ST: Masako... has submitted to 62 hours of indoctrination from  
Participant Process  
aged sages  
Participant

TT: 雅子は...62時間の教育を受けた  
Participant Process

Back Translation of the TT (BTT): Masako... received 62 hour(s) of education  
Participant Process

When examining the propositional ‘content’ of a message, we should look at the experiential meaning of the clause by finding answers to “Who did what to whom” (Thompson, 2004: 86) or “Who does what to whom under what circumstances?” (Butt et al., 2000: 46). Most clauses consist of the Process, the Participant and the Circumstance “with the Process being the essential ingredient” (ibid: 49). Since the translator is under a certain degree of constraint in reproducing a complete and equivalent translation in the service of power initiated by her immediate patron, that is, the Dai-san Shokan, it is readily imagined that she intended to maintain the ST Process in order to convey the same message in the TT. However, she replaces the ST Process of ‘submit to’ with another Process, ‘receive’. Since the Process functions as an ‘essential ingredient’ or central role in conveying a message, the change of the Process affects the experiential meaning significantly.

Although both are Behavioural Process which “encode physiological or psychological behaviour” (Butt et al., 2000: 51), the implication of each Process is different. Whereas the ST Process (‘submit to’) slightly suggests that the princess had no choice in receiving ‘indoctrination’ and that she reluctantly conformed to it, the TT Process implies that she willingly ‘received education’. By this transformation, the princess’ action becomes more active and suggests her willingness rather than reluctance.

Moreover, ‘indoctrination’ is changed to ‘education’ in the TT as ‘education’ is less bias and more neutral than ‘indoctrination’. In addition, the translator completely omits the last Participant ‘aged sages’ thereby not specifying ‘who’ gave indoctrination to the princess-to-be. As a result of such shifting, the TT as a whole projects a more positive image of what the princess learns for 62 hours from ‘aged sages’ — the special chamberlains who are officials of the Imperial Household Agency. By shifting, the translator also manages to eliminate the negative connotation of what and how the agency teaches the princess-to-be for as long as 62 hours.

In addition, the omission of the last ST Participant ‘aged sages’ may be due to the fact that it is a rude and cynical way of referring to the agency who administer royal family affairs. The translator might have intentionally omitted this Participant to avoid criticising the agency. While Lefevere states that ideological constraints are apparent in the passages where the translator inserts words or expressions “that are most emphatically not in the original” (1992a: 42), his view can be taken further by adding that ideological constraints can be also observed in the words or expressions that are ‘shifted’ and ‘omitted’ in the translation.

### **2.1.3 Economic and status elements of patronage**

Lefevere acknowledges that “translators tend to have relatively little freedom in their dealing with patrons, at least if they want to have their translations published” (1992b: 19). The fact that the translator of the TT is a freelance translator suggests that her income depends on the publication of the TT. This also means that she may have been under the constraint to produce a translation within the parameters set by her patron — the Dai-san Shokan. In other words, in order to secure her income, the translator might have been compelled to faithfully transport the ST messages while observing the publisher’s ideology of producing a complete and equivalent translation.

However, having her name printed on the translated book and taking part in the publication of the controversial book which contains critical views about the Imperial Household Agency (or the government at large) means that the translator’s reputation and status as a translator might be at stake since the government of Japan had once condemned its initial publication. By producing a totally complete and equivalent translation, the translator may be labelled by the government as anti-government or anti-imperial. As it has been explained with a set of examples in the previous section, it is evident that the translator resorts to shifting in the attempt to tone down explicit messages related to the Imperial Household Agency while also making the TT conform to the target government’s ideology to a certain degree. This suggests that she attempts to minimise her reputation as anti-government or anti-imperial in order to secure her status as a translator. In this respect, the translator is under double constraints: one is to produce a faithful translation in the service of power initiated by the publisher, and another is to produce a TT which conforms to the ideology of the governmental agency of the receiving system.

## 2.2 Ideological constraints prompted by the target audience

According to Hatim, the translation of ideology involves constraints for the translator and that “The constraints tend to be societal, including value systems shared collectively by a given social group” (2001: 127). Venuti further recognises “the identity-forming power of translation” (1998: 68). Indeed, translation has a great effect on the social mores and the identity forming process of the receiving society. In other words, translators play an important and influential part in that process, hence they are often under tremendous constraints of adapting or rewriting the original to respond to the social mores as well as to the ideological norms of the receiving society.

Although the imperial family no longer holds power in the ruling of the target country, the majority of the target audience has deep respect for royalty as the country’s ‘symbol’ in which they take great pride. The ST author also writes in the book that “polls consistently show that more than 70 per cent are in favour of an emperor” (Hills, 2006: 263). On the account of the target audience’s respect for the imperial family, the translator sometimes rewrites and manipulates the original text. For example:

ST: *few Japanese would be happy to see their monarchy abolished*

TT: 皇室がなくなることを楽しもう日本人はあまりいないだろう

BTT: *there are hardly any Japanese who would be happy to see (the) imperial clan disappear*

In all clauses, there is the Theme element which enables the writer/speaker to make his/her starting point to organise the message. The Theme comes at the very beginning of a clause in order to signal what the message is ‘about’ or is the ‘hook’ upon which the rest of the message (Rheme) hangs, as well as the ‘angle’

on the message being presented (White, 2001: 154). According to Butt et al., “the first position in a clause contains textual meanings because it signposts the development of a text” (2000: 135).

Whereas the ST Theme indicates that it is about ‘few Japanese’ and suggests that the rest of the message (Rheme) hooks on it, the TT Theme is an Existential Process (‘there are’) followed by negation of the existence (‘hardly any’). Although both texts are similar in their propositional meanings, the point of departure on which the Rheme is hooked is different and thereby the thematic structures or flows are different. Consequently, these clauses are different in terms of textual meanings.

Moreover, by the translator’s application of the Existential Process in the TT that is followed by negation of the existence (‘hardly any’), the denial of what the TT Rheme infers is stronger than what the ST states as a whole. While taking into account the target audience’s favourable sentiments about the royal family, as well as in the attempt to maintain the target society’s social mores towards the family, the translator may have deliberately rewritten or manipulated the above ST.

In addition, had the translator conveyed exactly the same textual message as the original, the majority of the target audience who admires the imperial family may be offended or insulted as the original message connotes that ‘there are’ some Japanese who would be happy to see their monarchy abolished. Moreover, the direct transportation of the ST message may also prompt the target audience to reject the whole text as the majority of the target audience is in favour of an emperor and, ultimately, the target audience may be very critical about the book as a whole, as well as the original writer. In order to avoid such possible negative responses and to allow the target readers to project a relatively acceptable image

of the original work and writer, the translator may have intentionally rewritten the original.

### 2.3 Constraints initiated by the translator's own sentiments or belief

As the publisher expects a complete and identical translation, the translator evidently transports the same amount of information as the ST. In fact, she renders almost all ST statements in spite of the fact that many of them are highly critical to the receiving audience's symbol and pride, that is, the imperial family. This indicates the translator's attempt to introduce the source culture of 'freedom of speech' to the receiving audience. However, she also skilfully employs various strategies to tone down some explicit messages and statements about the family. For example:

ST: *she becomes a member of the family of Japan's reigning emperor, the ailing Akihito, the 125<sup>th</sup> in the imperial lineage*

TT: 第125代天皇である病に苦しむ明仁天皇の家族の一員になる

BTT: (she) becomes a member of the family of Emperor Akihito who is suffering from illness

In terms of the propositional meaning, the TT conveys the same message as the ST, however they differ in the expressive meaning. While the second Participant of the ST is 'the ailing Akihito', that of the TT is 'Emperor Akihito who is suffering from illness'. The ST adjective of 'ailing' implies a certain degree of evaluation about the emperor's illness. It suggests that the emperor is sick and does not seem to be improving. However, the TT expresses a certain level of empathy towards the emperor's state as he is 'suffering' from illness. Replacing the original lexical item 'ailing' with 'suffering from illness' in the TT does not change the propositional meaning but tones down the expressive meaning significantly.

The reason behind this might be inferred from the translator's afterword. In the afterword, she writes that she considers the book "a record of human rights abuse. It is not only Princess Masako but all members of the imperial family, including the emperor, who are victims of the abuse" (my translation, Hills, 2007: 348). From this statement, it is clear that the translator is sympathetic towards the royal family as she regards them as victims whose human rights are violated. The translator's lexical choice in rendering the above ST into the TL could be a reflection of her own sympathetic sentiments towards the emperor's state as the above shift is not due to linguistic or textual constraints because the Japanese equivalent of 'ailing' may function in the same way as English and may also convey a similar degree of expressiveness. As the above TT interferes with the expressive meaning and imposes modifications that are not textual or linguistic constraints, it can be concluded that the shift or insertion of another expressive meaning in the TT is due to the translator's deliberate rewriting to neutralise or tone down the expressive implication of the original message while reflecting her own sentiments or beliefs about the emperor's state.

### 2.4 Constraints caused by creating greater interpersonal distances

Every clause is interpersonal in that all clauses act to position writer/speaker or reader/listener in some way (White, 2001: 7). In the TT, the translator employs the honorific language convention of the TL to create a certain distance with the imperial family thereby expressing a greater degree of respect for the family than the original. In this section, the interpersonal distance will be discussed in support of Lefevere's view on translation as a form of rewriting.

In the target culture, when people talk or write about/to their seniors or those with a higher social status, they apply various linguistic forms to create a certain distance in expressing modesty, politeness or respect. Emphasising such qualities



in writing/speaking is the convention and part of aesthetics in the target culture. The degree of distance to be created depends on the social status or reputation of the addressee as well as the interpersonal relation between the speaker/writer and the addressee. Hence the translator must understand the level of intimacy or distance between the two parties in order to apply the most appropriate level and type of honorifics to make the TT conform to the value system of the receiving culture.

There are three types of honorific language (the *sonkeigo*, the *kenjogo* and the *teineigo*) in the TL which are used to express one's respect and admiration for a senior or a social superior. In these forms of writing/speaking, nouns and verbs are replaced by their polite equivalents. The honorific language allows speakers/writers of the TL to express different degrees of respect, modesty and politeness. The translator uses all three types of honorific language in referring to the members of the royal family throughout the TT. Here is an example:

ST: *If I can be of support to you, I would like to humbly accept*

TT: 私がもし殿下のお力になれるのであれば、謹んでお受けしたいと存じます

BTT: If I can be of <sup>sonkeigo</sup>support to <sup>teineigo</sup>His Imperial Highness, (I) <sup>teineigo</sup>would like to <sup>kenjogo</sup>humbly <sup>teineigo</sup>accept.

The above is a statement of Princess Masako addressed to her husband-to-be. The translator expresses a greater extent of respect, humility and politeness in the TT than the ST. By applying the *kenjogo* for 'would like', she places 'I' (Masako Owada) in a much lower status than the addressee (Prince), thereby expressing Masako's humble and modest character. The use of the *teineigo* for 'support' and 'accept' emphasises Masako's politeness. Moreover, by applying the *sonkeigo* (His Imperial Highness) instead of 'you', the TT emphasises

Masako's modesty and respect for the prince. The translator creates a greater distance between Masako, who is still a commoner at the time of making the above utterance, and Prince Akihito, thereby conveying Masako's profound respect and admiration for the prince as well as her modesty and humility.

While the above TT conforms to the cultural norms of the target audience, the degree of respect, humility and politeness expressed in the TT may also be the reflection of a certain ideology. The translator may have intentionally or unintentionally reflected her own sentiments of respect and admiration for the imperial family, or it may be a result of her attempt in rendering the text to conform to the target audience's deep respect and favourable sentiments for the royal family. At the same time, it could also be an indication of the translator's attempt in making the TT conform to the publisher's or patron's intention.

In any case, the way the above ST is translated into the TL suggests that the TT is a 'rewriting' of the original as it reflects a certain ideology and poetics. Through creating a greater interpersonal distance between commoners and the royal family, the translator may have attempted to manipulate how the target audience reads the text and projects an image of the text.

## 2.5 Constraints prompted by projecting a certain image of the original text and its author

Lefevere argues that of the different forms of adaptations that writers commonly engage in, including translation, criticism, historiography, anthologies and editing, translation is the most obviously recognisable type of rewriting that is influential in projecting and disseminating the image of original writers and their works beyond the boundaries of their culture of origin (Lefevere, 1992a: 9).

As the target audience does not have direct access to the original text, they entirely depend on the translation to project a certain image of the original work and its writer. According to Lefevere, rewriters create images of a writer, a work, a period, a genre, sometimes even a whole literature (1992a: 5). He also stresses that an author's work gains exposure and achieves influence mainly through misunderstanding and misconceptions created by rewriters (Lefevere, 1999: 234).

Although the TT contains various overt and explicit comments or statements about the imperial family affairs of Japan like the ST, there are traces of ideological and poetical constraints initiated by the patronage, target culture, receiving audience and the translator's own beliefs. As a result, the TT is more neutral and less explicit in its statements about royal family affairs. In other words, the TT is a text comprised of refractions as it manipulates messages to project a more acceptable image of the original work and its writer.

The previous example texts illustrate that the translator evidently resorts to rewriting the original in the attempt to make the TT culturally, poetologically and ideologically acceptable for the receiving audience. By this, the translator allows the target audience to project a more positive image of the original text and its author, thereby also allowing the receiving audience to accept the original messages and opinions which are founded on the culture of free speech. In order to allow the target audience to appreciate cultural differences with regard to free speech, the translator skilfully applies the strategy of rewriting while projecting a positive image of the text and original writer.

## **2.6 Translation is rewriting**

Throughout section 2, it has been illustrated that translation involves cultural and ideological as well as poetological manipulation and that the TT is produced

under various constraints to serve certain purposes, being part of a constituent of a complex literary, and socio-cultural system. Translation therefore takes the form of rewriting carried out within the framework of the target language, culture and ideology in the service of control factors initiated by the patronage or receiving system.

In this respect, the translator is a 'rewriter' of the original text as she engages in the act of cultural and ideological transportation and distorts the ST to accommodate it into the TT. Although rewriters/translators are usually considered to be meticulous, hard-working, well-read and as honest as is humanly possible, complete equivalence between ST and TT may be impossible due to various constraints. Hence rewriters or translators could be deemed 'traitors' as they inflict a certain degree of violence on the original, about which they have no choice as long as they remain within the boundaries of the target culture (Lefevere, 1992a: 13).

Rewritings/translations are manipulation as they reflect their efforts in adapting the text to function in a given society in a given way. Also, they may be scandalous because they can create different values and practices. However, while their 'power' can be misused sometimes, the translator of the TT has employed the power positively in introducing the ST culture of free speech to the target audience while also preserving the target culture and public morals especially with regards to their symbol and pride, that is, the imperial family.

Venuti also acknowledges that translators have the power to influence society and literature as translation has "far-reaching social effects" (1998: 81). Indeed, they have the power to contribute to the preservation and enrichment of the target literature and society, as well as to the enhancement of trust, understanding and

respect between two different languages, cultures and ideologies. And furthermore, they may play invaluable roles in bringing the world closer.

### 3. Conclusion

This paper is founded on the proposition that ‘translated texts are products of the target culture and consequently, translators face various constraints in adapting texts to conform to the socio-cultural and ideological norms of the receiving audience’. The validity of this proposition is confirmed through the comparative analysis of shifts in this case study. The theoretical and practical findings will be summarised in this section.

Since the text is about the imperial family of the target society (Japan) written by a ‘foreigner’ who does not belong to the target culture, the position of the TT occupied in the target system is ‘peripheral’ as it is “modelled according to the norms already conventionally established by an already dominant type in the target literature” (Even-Zohar, 1999: 195). Toury also argues that the position or function of a translation within a recipient culture determines the actual make-up of the translation and governs the process of translating (1995: 12). Accordingly, there are many examples in the TT of where the translator tones down explicit statements related to the imperial family — the pride and symbol of the receiving society. Since the TT evidently occupies a peripheral or secondary position, the translator resorts to ‘rewriting’ the original text while experiencing constraints on account of ‘patronage’ and ‘ideology’ which are initiated by the target socio-cultural system.

Moreover, through this case study, it has been verified that the act of translating generally involves ‘domestication’ of the ST by which the translator aims to achieve dynamic equivalence or “complete naturalness of expression and tries to

relate the receptor to modes of behaviour relevant within the context of his own culture” (Nida, 1999: 129). It can also be said that the TT is the best ‘approximation’ of the ST as the translator attempts to make the TT acceptable in the target socio-cultural system.

Venuti argues that in terms of faithfulness, good translation incorporates foreignisation tendencies while bad translation domesticates the foreign culture (1998: 81). Indeed the translator should value fidelity and convey the same message in the TT. However, the way the ST is rendered into the TL suggests that the TT is a product which belongs to the target socio-cultural system as translations are often “designed to meet certain needs of, and/or occupy certain ‘slots’ in it” (Toury, 1995: 12). The shifts found in the TT also suggest that the translator is constantly under constraints to make the TT conform to the linguistic, socio-cultural and ideological norms of the target system since translations are not just simple representations of their ST, but rather, they are independent products which ultimately belong to the target culture.

It has also become apparent through this case study that the translator must have “a bilingual ability but also a bi-cultural vision” (Hatim & Mason, 1990: 223) as he/she is in a position to make judgements about the likely effect of the translation on the target audience. In addition, the translator has to be a competent processor of intentions and messages embedded in the ST. In other words, the translator has to make judgements to transport the original message in an appropriate manner for the receiving socio-cultural system and audience. In this respect, the translator is an attentive reader of the ST as well as a TT producer or rewriter.

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## Target Text

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